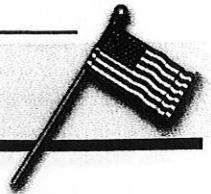


Name: _____ Date: _____

The End of the Cold War



After the Soviet Union and the United States came to the brink of war over the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, both nations took steps to prevent such a close call in the future. They signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and a "hot line" was installed between the White House and the Kremlin to make it possible for the world leaders to communicate if some tense situation developed.

During Richard Nixon's presidency, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and China improved. Nixon visited China in 1972 and opened relations with the communist government for the first time in 21 years. In May 1972, Nixon visited the Soviet Union, and he and Soviet Leader Leonid Brezhnev signed the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) treaty. This treaty limited the number of certain types of missiles. Trade between the United States and the Soviet Union also increased. This period was known as an era of *détente* (a French word meaning "relaxation").

The *détente* was broken in 1979 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. The United States condemned the action and both Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan toughened America's stance against the Soviet Union. The United States started a military buildup, American military aid was sent to anti-communist fighters in Afghanistan, and the United States increased the number of nuclear missiles stationed in Western Europe.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was going through a period of instability. In 1982, Leonid Brezhnev died. He was replaced by Yuri Andropov, who died in 1984, and then by Konstantin Chernenko, who died in 1985. The war in Afghanistan was dragging on, and the Soviet economy was stagnate. The Soviet people were ready for a change, and when Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed the new general secretary, he pushed for dramatic changes. In 1986, he called for a change in the economic system (called *perestroika*) and more freedom of speech and press (called *glasnost*).

By 1986, President Reagan had met with Gorbachev at Geneva, Switzerland, and Reykjavik, Iceland, to work out agreements to reduce stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The two leaders had developed a good working relationship, and this opened a new era in relations between the two nations.

The Soviet people began to hope that change was possible, and the people of the Soviet-controlled countries of Eastern Europe also began to demand change. In 1989, it became clear that Gorbachev was unlikely to order his troops to put down any revolts. Poland's communist regime crumbled when the Solidarity trade union was allowed to run against communists in elections in June 1989. Thousands of people began to leave East Germany by crossing the Hungarian border, and on November 9, 1989, a section of the Berlin Wall was opened. Free elections were held in East Germany and Hungary in 1990, and the communists were voted out. Violent clashes between demonstrators and the governments of Czechoslovakia and Romania finally gave way to free elections in both countries, but not before Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu was captured and executed.

By December 1990, all 15 of the republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had declared independence. In 1991, Boris Yeltsin, who had left the Communist Party, was elected the leader of the new independent Russian Republic. The Cold War ended, and the Russian people began to concentrate on restoring the economy of their nation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

The End of the Cold War Hidden Message Puzzle

Use the clues below to fill in the blanks at the right. When you are finished, read the letters in the circled blanks to find the Russian word that means "reform."

1. Last name of the man who replaced Brezhnev _____ (Circled blank)
2. French word meaning "relaxation" _____ (Circled blank)
3. What the "S" in the SALT treaty stands for _____ (Circled blank)
4. This was installed between the White House and the Kremlin (two words) _____
5. The SALT treaty limited the number of certain types of _____. _____ (Circled blank)
6. Country invaded by the Soviet Union in 1979 _____ (Circled blank)
7. Polish trade union _____ (Circled blank)
8. The Soviet-controlled countries of _____ Europe began to demand change. _____ (Circled blank)
9. Russian word related to increasing freedom of speech and the press _____ (Circled blank)
10. Gorbachev and this U.S. President had a good working relationship. _____
11. This man was elected the leader of the Russian Republic in 1991. _____ (Circled blank)
12. One of the cities where Reagan and Gorbachev met _____ (Circled blank)
13. This was opened on November 9, 1989. (two words) _____
14. Soviet leader who pushed for dramatic changes _____ (Circled blank)
15. All 15 of these had declared independence by December 1990. _____